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Note for Moog, Karen

From: Merlo, Ellen
Date: Sun, Mar 7, 1993 5:44 PM
Subject: FW: FET
To: Moog, Karen

PRINT OUT FOR 9:30 MEETING

From: Pressl, Lance on Sun, Mar 7, 1993 5:36 PM
Subject: RE: FET
To: Merlo, Ellen

Generally, I believe we have to approach the tax/health care battle much like we would if we were running a campaign against a long term incumbent. Out of the box, we are at a major disadvantage, i.e., we don't have incumbency and the concomitant credibility and prestige that follows and we don't have a built in communication vehicle to the electorate. As a result, we have to create all of these elements--and we have to do it now. We are also at a major disadvantage because we have multiple targets, i.e., the excise itself (state and local) and all of the social cost arguments and a public anxious enough to do just about anything to solve the health care crisis. I think we have to target all areas--which may require different strategies and tactics. Here are a couple of ideas, which I'll limit to dot points:

- Develop a credible anti-tax grass roots organization with a highly visible and credible executive director who can serve as spokesperson. Someone with the flavor and charisma of Ross Perot would be ideal. I mention him because I see television and infomercials as being a key communication vehicle in this battle. The key to this effort will be to stir up and mobilize the middle class' anti tax sentiment. My concern here is that the middle and lower classes have been lulled into complacency after the election and will be too accepting to sacrifice. It may be useful to survey the public on this issue to determine hot buttons and determine our vulnerable points on the tax and health care issues. The Times had an interesting piece about how far Americans are willing to go with health care reform today.

- Similarly, I think it would be worthwhile to develop a credible organization consisting of business interests that will be affected by the Clinton health care plan. The idea here is to have a counter voice to the administration's and pinpoint more prudent measures to health care reform and tax/spending decisions. It may be worthwhile to work with the Republicans here; I understand they are working on a separate program to reduce health care costs, the deficit.

- We should develop a program where we build upon the connections our RDs have with members. First thing we should do is allow them to identify key legislators/friends in Congress and then develop specific lobbying plans to address the industry's needs.

- We need to identify and retain the best minds on the tax and health care financing issues. While we do have good internal resources, we are competing against the best the Administration could find. We need to bring a few of our own in house to guide us through this maze. I'm sure Craig can ID some influential Bush people and we can find the academic types.

- We have to personalize the impact of the Administration's tax and health care programs. By this I mean we have to identify all of the constituent groups, whether they be middle to lower

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class families, farmers, pharmaceutical workers, insurance salespeople, medical professionals, etc. who will suffer. And then we have to communicate their stories in macro sense, i.e., total # of jobs lost, lost state revenues, etc. and in a micro sense, i.e., how the tax specifically hurts family X, Y, Z.

•We have to emphasize the loss of states rights under the Clinton program. NCSL/ALEC should be useful groups in this effort.

•Given the NYT's editorial today, I don't think we will get a good deal of mileage from the regressivity argument. I do think, however, that the Times' editorial was very paternalistic--and that is the angle that should be pursued. This is not so much a program as it is a way we should develop our argument.

More detail can be added, but generally this is the approach I suggest we undertake.

From: Merlo, Ellen on Thu, Mar 4, 1993 11:14 PM

Subject: FET

To: Buckner, Steve; Cramer, Mary; Dillard, Jack; Fisher, Scott; Han, Vic; Inmann, Pam; Lattanzio, Ted; Laufer, David; Lemperes, Jim; McDaniel, Janice; Paluszek, Matt; Pontarelli, Jim; Poole, Jay; Portnoy, Sharon; Pressl, Lance; Spector, James; Turner, Henry; Walls, Tina

Cc: Parrish, Steve

ASK ME NO QUESTIONS AND I'LL TELL YOU NO LIES. I NEED FROM EACH OF YOU BY SUNDAY NITE YOUR RECOMMENDATION OF WHAT YOU WOULD DO IF YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF FIGHTING THE FEDERAL EXCISE TAX.

THAT MEANS IF IT WERE TOTALLY UP TO US TO CALL THE SHOTS WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TACTICS WE WOULD EMPLOY. I NEED BULLETT POINTS, I DON'T NEED A DETAILED PLAN.

I WILL ASSEMBLE EVERYONE'S SUGGESTIONS AND COMPILE ALL THE IDEAS. I HAVE TO SUBMIT TO STEVE FIRST THING MONDAY A.M. ANYTHING YOU CAN DO BY THE END OF THE DAY TOMORROW WILL BE APPRECIATED. BUT I WILL GET ON MY POWERBOOK OVER THE WEEKEND FOR ALL SU BMISSIONS.

HAVE A HEART, THOUGH, I'D LIKE TO WORK NOT TOO LATE INTO THE NITE ON SUNDAY. WHEN I GET FEEDBACK, I'LL SHARE IT -- THANKS EVERYONE!